

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): A consumable item system, comprising:

a consumable item apparatus configured to store a variety of consumable items for an image forming apparatus at a user side;

a consumable item supplying section configured to supply a variety of consumable items for the image forming apparatus to the user side upon request, said consumable item supplying section being connected to the consumable item apparatus via a communication circuit;

C' at least a first sensor configured to detect that a corresponding consumable item in the image forming apparatus needs replenishment;

at least a second sensor configured to detect one of a type and a size of the corresponding consumable item needing replenishment in the image forming apparatus;

a consumable item replenishment signal generating device configured to generate a signal indicating said first sensor has detected the corresponding consumable item needs replenishment;

a detector configured to detect the signal generated by the generating device;

a counter configured to count a duration of time period that said detector detects said signal, said time period being adjustably set at the user side;

a consumable item order data transmitting device configured to transmit order data indicating a request for the corresponding consumable item that needs to be replenished to the consumable item supplying section via the communication circuit, when the signal is detected continuously by the detecting device for more than the time period set at the user side; and

a delivery data transmitting device included in the consumable item supplying section and configured to transmit delivery data of the corresponding consumable item from the

consumable item supplying section to the user side such that a delivery status of the corresponding consumable item to be replenished can be confirmed.

Claims 2-5 (Canceled).

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The consumable item system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a data receiving device configured to receive the order data transmitted from the order data transmitting device.

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Claim 7 (Canceled).

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The consumable item system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said delivery data includes information corresponding to a day when distribution of the corresponding consumable item is started by the consumable item supplying section and a day when the corresponding consumable item is scheduled to be delivered to the user side.

Claim 9 (Canceled).

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The consumable item system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said communication device includes a wireless system.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The consumable item system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said consumable item ~~keeping~~ system is employable regardless of a model and manufacturer of the image forming apparatus.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The consumable item system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said order data is reset when said signal disappears before said time period has elapsed.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The consumable item system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said consumable item data transmitting device is disposed at the user side.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The consumable item system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said data receiving device is disposed at the consumable item supply section.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The consumable item system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a display at the user side on which said delivery data is displayed.

Claim 16 (Canceled).

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): A method for keeping consumable items, comprising the steps of:

setting a consumable item replenishment level for a corresponding consumable item for an image forming apparatus stored in a consumable item apparatus at a user side;

detecting that a corresponding consumable item in the image forming apparatus needs replenishment based on the setting step;

detecting one of a type and a size of the corresponding consumable item needing replenishment in the image forming apparatus;

generating a signal indicating replenishment of the corresponding consumable item has been detected;

detecting the signal generated in the generating step;

counting a duration of time period that the generated signal is detected, said time period being adjustably set at the user side;

transmitting order data indicating a request for the corresponding consumable item that needs to be replenished to a consumable item supplying section via a communication circuit, when the signal is continuously detected for more than the time period set at the user side; and

transmitting delivery data of the corresponding consumable item to be distributed from the consumable item supplying section to the user side such that a delivery status of the corresponding consumable item to be replenished can be confirmed.

Claims 18 and 19 (Canceled).

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The consumable item method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a step of:

displaying information of the delivery data at the user side.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): A consumable item system comprising:

consumable item means for storing a variety of consumable items for an image forming apparatus at a user side;

consumable item supplying means for supplying a variety of consumable items for the image forming apparatus to the user side upon request, said consumable item supplying means being connected to the consumable item means via communication means;

at least a first means for detecting that a corresponding consumable item in the image forming apparatus needs replenishment;

at least a second means for detecting one of a type and a size of the corresponding consumable item needing replenishment in the image forming apparatus;

signal generating means for generating a signal indicating said first means has detected the corresponding consumable item needs replenishment;

signal detecting means for detecting the signal generated by the signal generating means;

counting means for counting a duration of time that said detecting means detects said signal, said time period being adjustably set at the user side;

consumable item order data transmitting means for transmitting order data indicating a request for the corresponding consumable item that needs to be replenished to the consumable item supplying means via the communication means, when the signal detecting means continuously detects the signal for more than the time period set at the user side; and

delivery data transmitting means included in the consumable item supplying means for transmitting delivery data indicating a consumable item distributing day and consumable item scheduled delivery day from the consumable item supplying means to the user side such that a delivery status of the corresponding consumable items to be replenished can be confirmed.

Claim 22 (Canceled).

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The consumable item system as claimed in claim 21, further comprising:

displaying means for displaying the delivery data at the user side.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): A consumable item system, comprising:

a consumable item apparatus configured to store a variety of consumable items for an image forming apparatus at a user side;

a consumable item supplying section configured to supply a variety of consumable items for the image forming apparatus to the user side upon request, said consumable item supplying section being connected to the consumable item apparatus via a communication circuit;

at least a first sensor configured to detect that a corresponding consumable item in the image forming apparatus needs replenishment;

a consumable item replenishment signal generating device configured to generate a signal indicating said first sensor has detected the corresponding consumable item needs replenishment;

a detector configured to detect the signal generated by the generating device;

a counter configured to count a duration of time period that said detector detects said signal, said time period being adjustably set at the user side;

a consumable item order data transmitting device configured to transmit order data indicating a request for the corresponding consumable item that needs to be replenished to the consumable item supplying section via the communication circuit, when the signal is detected continuously by the detecting device for more than the time period set at the user side;

a delivery data transmitting device included in the consumable item supplying section and configured to transmit delivery data of the corresponding consumable item from the consumable item supplying section to the user side such that a delivery status of the corresponding consumable item to be replenished can be confirmed; and

a display at the user side on which said delivery data is displayed.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): A method for keeping consumable items, comprising the steps of:

setting a consumable item replenishment level for a corresponding consumable item for an image forming apparatus stored in a consumable item apparatus at a user side;

detecting that a corresponding consumable item in the image forming apparatus needs replenishment based on the setting step;

generating a signal indicating replenishment of the corresponding consumable item has been detected;

detecting the signal generated in the generating step;

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counting a duration of time period that the generated signal is detected, said time period being adjustably set at the user side;

transmitting order data indicating a request for the corresponding consumable item that needs to be replenished to a consumable item supplying section via a communication circuit, when the signal is continuously detected for more than the time period set at the user side;

transmitting delivery data of the corresponding consumable item to be distributed from the consumable item supplying section to the user side such that a delivery status of the corresponding consumable item to be replenished can be confirmed; and

displaying information of the delivery data at the user side.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): A consumable item system comprising:

consumable item means for storing a variety of consumable items for an image forming apparatus at a user side;

consumable item supplying means for supplying a variety of consumable items for the image forming apparatus to the user side upon request, said consumable item supplying means being connected to the consumable item means via communication means;

at least a first means for detecting that a corresponding consumable item in the image forming apparatus needs replenishment;

signal generating means for generating a signal indicating said first means has detected the corresponding consumable item needs replenishment;

signal detecting means for detecting the signal generated by the signal generating means;

counting means for counting a duration of time that said detecting means detects said signal, said time period being adjustably set at the user side;

consumable item order data transmitting means for transmitting order data indicating a request for the corresponding consumable item that needs to be replenished to the consumable item supplying means via the communication means, when the signal detecting means continuously detects the signal for more than the time period set at the user side;

delivery data transmitting means included in the consumable item supplying means for transmitting delivery data indicating a consumable item distributing day and consumable item scheduled delivery day from the consumable item supplying means to the user side such that a delivery status of the corresponding consumable items to be replenished can be confirmed; and

display means for displaying the delivery data at the user side.